

CLAIMS:

1. A modular catheter which includes:
an elongate tubular member having a proximal end and a closed, distal end with
a lumen extending from the proximal end to the distal end and a plurality of electrodes
5 arranged at, or adjacent, the distal end, conductors for the electrodes being contained
within a wall of the tubular member;
an elongate shape-imparting mechanism removably received within the lumen
of the tubular member such that a distal end of the shape-imparting mechanism is
substantially in register with the distal end of the tubular member; and
10 a control device having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the
tubular member and a proximal end of the shape-imparting mechanism being releasably
connectable to the distal end of the control device.
2. The modular catheter of claim 1 in which the shape-imparting mechanism and
15 the tubular member are releasably connectable to the control device independently of
each other.
3. The modular catheter of claim 1 or claim 2 in which the shape-imparting
mechanism has an outer diameter approximating that of a diameter of the lumen of the
20 tubular member to be a snug fit within the lumen of the tubular member.
4. The modular catheter of claim 3 in which the shape-imparting mechanism
comprises a steering mechanism to effect steering of the distal end of the tubular
member.
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5. The modular catheter of any one of the preceding claims in which the proximal
end of the tubular member carries a connector thereon for connection to a
corresponding connector of the control device.
- 30 6. The modular catheter of any one of the preceding claims in which a proximal
end of the shape-imparting mechanism carries a coupling mechanism for effecting
releasable mechanical coupling to the control device and to a manipulating element of
the control device.
- 35 7. The modular catheter of claim 6 in which the manipulating element is an
actuator which is linearly displaceable relative to a body of the control device.

8. The modular catheter of claim 7 in which the coupling mechanism has a first securing formation releasably connectable to the body of the control device and a second securing formation releasably connectable to the actuator so that displacement
5 of the securing formations relative to each other causes lateral displacement of the distal end of the steering mechanism and, hence, the distal end of the tubular member.

9. The modular catheter of any one of the preceding claims which includes a disposable, covering member for the control device.

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10. The modular catheter of any one of claims 1 to 3 in which the shape-imparting mechanism is a stylet which is received in the lumen of the tubular member.

11. A modular catheter which includes:

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an elongate tubular member having a proximal end and a closed, distal end with a lumen extending from the proximal end to the distal end and a plurality of electrodes arranged at, or adjacent, the distal end, conductors for the electrodes being contained within a wall of the tubular member;

20 an elongate shape-imparting mechanism removably received within the lumen of the tubular member such that a distal end of the shape-imparting mechanism is substantially in register with the distal end of the tubular member; and

an elongate control device having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the tubular member and a proximal end of the shape-imparting mechanism being releasably connectable to the distal end of the control device, the control device
25 carrying an actuator thereon which is displaceable along a longitudinal axis of the control device for controlling displacement of the distal end of the shape-imparting mechanism to effect displacement of the distal end of the distal end of the tubular member.

30 12. A modular catheter which includes:

an elongate tubular member having a proximal end and a closed, distal end with a lumen extending from the proximal end to the distal end and a plurality of electrodes arranged at, or adjacent, the distal end, conductors for the electrodes being contained within a wall of the tubular member;

an elongate shape-imparting mechanism removably received within the lumen of the tubular member such that a distal end of the shape-imparting mechanism is substantially in register with the distal end of the tubular member; and

- 5 a control device having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the tubular member and a proximal end of the shape-imparting mechanism being releasably connectable to the distal end of the control device, the control device including a body and an actuator displaceably arranged on the body, a proximal end of the shape-imparting mechanism carrying a first securing formation releasably connectable to the actuator and a second securing formation releasably connectable to the body.